IMPRISON, PERSECUTE

Saints and Servants of GOD, for Meeting together in his Name and Fear, to Worship him as he Requireth.

THe hour cometh, and now is, wherein the true Worshippers do worship the Father in Spirit, and in Truth, who witness the Prophesie of Christ fulfilled, *John* 4. 23. And such also do witness with the Servants of God in the days of old, That God who made the World, and all Things therein, dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands, neither is he Worshipped with Mens Hands, *Acts* 17. This God is an unlimited Spirit, and therefore his worship cannot be limited to any *particular House* or *Place*. Though *a Temple* was commanded to be *Builded* at *Jerusalem* once, unto which all the Regions of the Jews were to be gathered, and to worship; yet when Christ the Son of God came into the World, he Prophesied the Destruction of it, and said *Their House should be left unto them Desolate*, *Mat.* 23. 38. And for this the Jews slew him. And he gathered great Multitudes, sometimes upon *the Mountaines*, sometimes *by the Sea-shore*, and sometimes *in Houses*; And they that were his Ministers, sent forth and Authorised by him, did not *limit* People unto *such* and *such Temples* and *Houses*, set up in *such* and *such Parishes*, called *Churches*; but taught People *Publiquely*, from *House* to *House*, testifying to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards Jesus Christ*, Acts 20.

two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them, Mat. 18.20. Now here is no limit in what Place People should be gathered together; for as he was no Respecter *of Persons*, so he was no Respecter *of Places*; and Paul *Dwelt two whole years in his own hired House, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him*, Acts 28. 30, 31. Here was Preaching the Kingdom of God *in a House*, and a Meeting *in a House*, and not forbidden, as it is in these our dayes; neither was he Persecuted for Preaching *in his own hired House*: And the same Apostle did greet the Church that was in *Aquilla* and *Priscilla's House*, Rom. 16. 5. And *Paul* again writing to the Corinthians, said that the Church *in Aquilla's House* did salute them, 1 *Cor.* 16. 19.

Now here was gathering *in Houses* in the Primitive times as we may read of, which was approved of God, and of his Ministers, under the Gospell, and were not haled out of their Houses by any, except by *Saul* and the like, who made havock of the Church, entring into every House, and haling Men and Women, and Committed them to Prison, as we may read in *Act.* 8.3. Here are *many Sauls* in these our dayes abroad in the World, who go under a better Name, and would be counted Christians, but are walking in the same steps that *Saul* the Persecutor of the Saints did, entring into Mens Houses, and haling Men and Women, and committing them to Prison for Meeting together, in their own Houses, peaceably to worship the Lord, in Spirit and Truth; and would have them

to

to promise to do it no more; which I do not read that *Saul* did do; So you manifest your selves to be worse than him; And in the dayes of the Prophet *Malachi*, *They that feared the Lord met often together, and spake one to another*; and the Lord said, *They should be his, in the day that he made up his Jewels*; and *Paul* Preached unto the People till midnight, *in an upper Chamber*, where they were gathered together, *Acts* 20. 7, 8. And we do not read that the Magistrates sent *Constables* to break up their Meeting, neither did they limit them *to a Parochial Church*, as it is now called; and *Paul* writing to the *Colossians*, saluted the Brethren which were at *Laodicea*, and *Nymphas*, and the Church, *which were in his House*, Col. 4. 15.

Now none of these Assemblies were forbidden, neither broken up by rude Men, as many Christian Assemblies are now, who Meet together for no other end, but to Worship God in Spirit and Truth, according to the Scriptures of Truth; and *Paul* writing to *Timothy*, said, *He willed that Men Pray every where, lifting up Holy Hands, without Wrath and Doubting*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. He did not limit Men to *such* and *such Places* to Pray in, as this Generation of Men do; and *Daniel* kneeled down upon his Knees three times a Day in his House, and Prayed, and gave Thanks before his God, as he did aforetime, though the King had Signed *a Writing*, and *a Decree* to the contrary, *Dan.* 6. 9, 10, 11. For which he was cast into the Den of Lyons, *Dan.* 6. 16. Now he could not be subject to the King, nor his Lords, in forbearing to pray in his own House, though he could suffer what penalty they inflicted upon him; yet God de-

livered him out of the Lyons Mouthes, *Dan.* 6. 22.

And the Magistrates commanded the Apostles *Not to speak at all, nor teach in the Name of Jesus*: but *Peter* and *John* answered, and said unto them, *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, Judge you? for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*, Acts 4. 18,19,20. So now, you who are commanding things contrary to the Commands of God, whether it be right in the sight of God to obey Him, or Yee? judge of this your selves, this thing is no ways different from what it was in the dayes of old: and in Acts 12. 12. *Peter* came *to the House* of *Mary* the *Mother* of *John*, where many were gathered together *Praying*: this was not called an Unlawfull Assembly by him, neither forbidden, as such Assemblies are now by them, who profess themselves Christians and Ministers of the Gospell; but their end shall be according *to their Works*, not according *to their Words*; for they have gotten *the good Words*, and the *fair Speeches*, and by them have long deceived the Hearts of the Simple, but the day is broken forth, which hath discovered all their evill Deeds: Therefore all you Rulers and Magistrates, of what Degree soever, Take heed what you now are doing; for if this thing which you are now striving against *be of God*, you cannot *destroy it*; but if not, *It will come to nothing of it selfe*. But in the mean time, take heed that you be not Fighters against God, for in as much as you have done this, to the least of his Children and Servants, you have done it to him, for so it will be laid to your charge, in the Day of his Account; Be not *High-minded*, nor *Stout-hearted* against the Lord, nor any of

his

his Chosen Ones, who Assemble together in his Name and Fear, in Peace with Him and all Men, and *Dare not forsake the Assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, lest they should loose the Sence and Feeling of the Presence of the Lord, which hath been often manifested in their Assemblies.*

For alwayes the people of God, for Worshipping of God, were Imprisoned, or Suffered by such that Imposed things upon them, that they could not Obey, but Sin against God: Therefore by *such* they were judged as *Transgressors* of *Commands* and *Laws*, as the *three Children* to *Nebuchadnezzar*, and as *Mordecai* to *Haman*, and the *Jews* to the *Heathen*, and the *Christians* among the *Jews* and *Heathen*, amongst whom they witnessed *Christ* the *Substance*; though the thing that was Just and Equall, and righteous in the sight of God, and all Men for Conscience Sake, and the Lords Sake, they were willing to obey and yeeld themselves to the utmost: And likewise in *Queen Maries dayes*, the *Martyrs* were put *to death* as *Rebels*, because they could not obey her Lawes that compelled to her Worship, which was contrary to Christ, and the Apostles Doctrine, and the true Foundation that was laid at the beginning of the Christians; for Christ and the Apostles did not go on, in the Jews forcing Laws, and putting Men to Death that opposed them, but stood in that in which they had love to Enemies; and Christ said, *Let the Tares and Wheat grow, and stand till Harvest:* for them that go about to pluck up and persecute, have denied the Exercise of Patience, and the Doctrine of Repentance, whereby People might have

a Space to Repent; For if the Christians should have put *Saul to Death*, because he was a *Blasphemer*, and because he was a *Heretick*, and Christ, if he had Banished, or Imprisoned any, or spoiled their Goods, then the Christians might have had an Example from the Apostles, and Christ, for Prisoning, and making the Contrary-Minded to suffer; but that is not Christs way, but the *Jewes* and *Heathens Way*. And as for Meeting together to Worship God in his Fear, that cannot be Offensive to good Government, and to the Creation, but rather a preserving of it, for such seek the Peace of all Men, and their Eternall Welfare and Prosperity; which *Ballad-Singers*, *Stage-Players*, and all manner of *Playes*, and *Sports*, and *Games*, these Meetings *are not good for the Creation*, nor for *a Common-wealth*, by which the Name God is so daily *Prophaned*, & *Blasphemed*; nor these Meetings we see not broken up *by Armed Men, with Clubs and Constables*; but they make such a noise in the Streets, that people can hardly do their business, or hear one another speake, the Townes are so filled with *Ballad-Singers*, and things that tend to the stirring up Strife a[illegible]st People, Mis-naming, and Lying, and Slande[illegible] of them; which its much, that here should be such as are call *Ministers* and *Bishops*, that profess themselves to be Ministers of Christ, and Preachers of the Gospell, how they can without much Shame or Blushing walk in the Streets, to see the Wickedness and Prophaneness of their People and Hearers, and see what fruits they have. Surely though they take upon them these Names and Titles, yet they do not regard the *Apostles*, *Pauls* and *Peters* Exhortations: for such things are not of a Good

Report

Report to them, though we can Patiently bear, even as the Lord moves us: For this we know, *That every one that Navies the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, should depart from Iniquity.*

But as for all Murtherous Plots and Conspiracies against any, We are, and always have been clear, and Innocent, and in the Srength of the Lord are resolved to stand clear to the end; for the Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnall but Spirituall, and our Kingdom is not of this World, neither is it for an Earthly Crown that we strive: Neither can we rejoyce at the destruction of any, but that all may come to the knowledge of God, and be saved; but if any of us be found in any Unrighteousnes, Invasion, or Insurrection, in any of our Assemblies, contrary to Truth and Righteousnes, in the sight of God and all good Men, let us suffer accordingly: But you turning your Hand against Meek, Quiet, Innocent and Harmless Men, and throwing them into Prison, who wrong no Man, neither in Thought, Word nor Deed, will give a great Occasion to many, and may turn many against you, which otherwise would not; for if peaceable men cannot be suffered to live in Peace with God, their Neighbour, and all Men, what Encouragement will this be to all Plotters, and Peace-Breakers? So Consider in Meekness, whose Work you are now doing; for the Cry of Innocent Blood, & the Oppression of such, will be more against you than all your enemies: many of your progenitors have fallen by such things, by the Stroke of Gods Hand only, though they whom they Oppressed did never Avenge their own wrong; yet by such things, and for them did God take an Occasion to vex, and scourg his and their

Adversaries,

Adversaries, and cut them off in his hot displeasure.

These things are laid before you in tender Love to your Immortall Souls, that you may not go on in their steps, lest their end be your reward.

This from a True and Faithful Subject in the Kingdom of *England*, who wisheth it's Peaceable Government in Righteousnes called

Ambrose Rigg.

POST-SCRIPT.

And the great Noises, God save the King, God bless the King, *amongst such as do not fear God, and are not sencible of Gods blessings, nor of his Salvation, that be out of Gods fear, which they that would have him Saved and Blessed, and all Men upon the Earth, such live in the Fear of God, and depart from Sin and Evill that leads into Destruction from God, from Blessing and Salvation, and they that live in the Fear of God, know Salvation, know the Blessings, and would have Him and all Men blessed and saved: but all who live in Sin, in Unrighteousnese, in Ungodlinesse, Cursing, Swearing, Drunkennesse, and in Unrighteous Wages, and Corrupt, Wicked, and Perverse and Unholy Lives, such live out of the fear of God, and yet may say* God Bless the King, *and* God Save the King, *in Deceit, Hypocrisie, and Flattery, and in taking Gods Name in Vain, being out of his Fear, which grieves them that are in Truth, and the Fear of God, who can say those Words in the Truth, and would have all that name the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Depart from Iniquity, and who would have him Saved, and them Blessed, and all Men upon the Earth.*

THE END.

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